

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 1 and 11 are amended. The remaining claims are unchanged.

In the Office Action, claims 1-20 were rejected under 25 USC §102(e) as anticipated by Klots et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,144,983).

In the discussion of claim 1, the Office Action stated that "[t]he method steps recited in lines 9-11 are optionally recited by the usage of an 'if' clause and thus are accorded no patentable weight." Claims 1 and 11 have been amended accordingly to clarify the subject matter of those claims. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20 are patentable over Klots for the reasons below.

Claim 1, by way of example, recites:

identifying a first synchronization construct that is suitable for use in granting access to the object;

determining when the first synchronization construct is available;

when the first synchronization construct is unavailable, determining whether the thread that is attempting to acquire access to the object is already associated with the object;

when the thread is already associated with the object, releasing the association; and

associating the first synchronization construct with the object when it is determined that the first synchronization construct is available. (Emphasis added.)

The method defined by claim 1 includes the feature of a first synchronization construct that is suitable for use in granting access to an object. As recited in claim 1, when the first synchronization construct is unavailable, it is determined whether the thread that is attempting to acquire access to the object is already associated with the object. When the thread is already associated with the object, the association is released. In one embodiment, when the first synchronization construct is a lock, the thread is not allowed to relock a locked object. Instead, the thread releases the association to enable the thread to once again lock the object. This feature provides the benefit of preventing nested object locking. (Application as filed, page 13, lines 17-19).

Klots fails to disclose or suggest the feature, "when the thread is already associated with the object, releasing the association," as recited in claim 1. Instead, Klots teaches maintaining already granted locks and modifying them. According to Klots, a granted lock is not released, but rather escalated from a finer-grain lock to a coarser-grain lock or vice versa. In particular, as described at col. 10, lines 15-30, if the same process holds a conflicting lock, either the fine-grain locks are modified into a single coarse-grain lock, or when the lock cannot be escalated, the process simply waits for the requested resource to become available. At no point does Klots disclose or suggest releasing the lock. The method of claim 1, on the other hand, provides for releasing the association between an object and the thread attempting to acquire access to the object.

The teachings of Klots are made clear in the example described at col. 12, line 66 through col. 13, line 12. When the fourth process already holds a lock on the requested resource, in step 424 it is determined whether the finer-grain lock can be escalated to a coarser-grain lock. Instead of releasing the lock, the lock is maintained, and it is then determined whether additional resources within a bucket can be locked by that same fourth process. By contrast, claim 1 provides, "when the thread is already associated with the object, releasing the association." (Emphasis added.)

Because Klots fails to disclosure or suggest, "when the thread is already associated with the object, releasing the association," as recited in claim 1, Klots fails to anticipate claim 1 under 35 USC §102(e). This rejection should be withdrawn.

Independent claims 8, 11 and 17 incorporate similar features as claim 1. Thus, the cited reference fails to anticipate these claims for the same reasons as claim 1.

Dependent claims 2-7, 9, 10, 12-16 and 18-20 incorporate all of the features of the independent claims on which they are based. Therefore, the cited reference fails to anticipate these claims for at least the same reasons as independent claims 1, 8, 11 and 17.

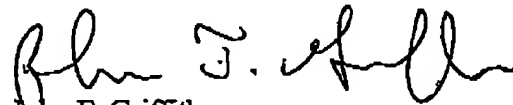
CONCLUSION

In view of the above Amendments and Remarks, Applicant submits that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance. Early notification to that effect is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that a further telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, Applicant's attorney can be reached at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS, LLP



John F. Griffith

Registration No. 44,137

P.O. Box 778
Berkeley, CA 94704-0778
(510) 843-6200